

THE  
L I F E  
OF 1471 & 37.  
SAINT MARGARET,  
QUEEN OF SCOTLAND.  
WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF  
HER HUSBAND,  
M A L C O L M . III,  
SURNAMED  
K E A N M O R E,  
AND OF  
THEIR CHILDREN.

---

BY THE RIGHT REVEREND  
DR. JOHN GEDDES.

---

ABERDEEN:  
PRINTED BY J. CHALMERS AND CO.

MDCXCIV.

Agnes Thompson



---

THE  
P R E F A C E.

**I**Have long observed, with some regret, that the edifying life of St. Margaret, is too little known here in Scotland, which was the principal theatre of her virtuous actions. It is true, a short history of her has been repeatedly published, along with that of the other Saints; but these works, being necessarily voluminous, are too costly to be in the hands of many.

For this reason, some thoughts were entertained of giving to the press, a translation made into English, many years ago, of a life of this Saint written, in Italian, by father William Leslie, brother to Count Leslie, of the family of Balquhain, and of the Society of Jesus, when he was Rector of the Scotch College at Rome, which was printed in that city, in the year 1674, and was dedicated to the Princess of Rossano, by the superiors and students of that college.

But, on an attentive perusal of that translation, it was easily perceived, that the translator had kept too closely to the Italian Idiom, and that therefore his English Language is often uncouth and improper.—Hence it was thought necessary, to give an entirely new dress to the old materials. And, in doing this, it has been judged proper to adopt an arrangement somewhat different; some dates, that were thought erroneous, have been corrected: several observations have been interspersed: some additions, from good authority, have been made, and particularly a more full account of St. Margaret's children has been subjoined.

*The*

The documents, from whence this history is drawn, are, in the first place, the historical works of Will of Malmesbury, of Simeon of Durham, Hoveden, Matthew Paris, Fordun, Boece, and the other English and Scotch historians, who write of those times. Besides this, Turgot the Saint's confessor wrote her life, which however has not appeared under his name in these latter ages, tho' it is often quoted by Fordun and others. But Papebroch the Bollandist, has published in the *Acts of the Saints*, at June the tenth, a life of her, under the name of Theodoric, which is allowed by the best critics to be authentic. This author was also confessor to St. Margaret, and it is very probable, according to Lord Hailes and other writers, that Theodoric is another name for Turgot, or that the name of Theodoric has been prefixed to the Saint's life instead of that of Turgot, by the mistake of some copier.— Papebroch thinks they were two distinct persons. Aelred Abbot of Rievaulx in Yorkshire, who lived for some time at the court of David our Saint's son, also wrote her life. From these sources have been drawn the lives of Saint Margaret, which are to be met with in the lives of the Saints, published by Surius, Capgrave, and by Butler, as also in Britannia Sancta, and in the catalogue of Scotch Saints given by David Chalmers, in his book on the Piety and Bravery of the Scotch. We likewise learn from Nicolson's Scotch Library, that besides Father Leslie's work, a separate life of St. Margaret, had been written in Spanish by John de Soto, and printed at Alcala, in the year 1617; and another in London in the year 1661, with this title: An idea of a perfect Princess, in the life of St. Margaret Queen of Scotland. These two last pieces are certainly long since become rare.

Father Leslie quotes Theodoric, Aelred, and the ancient English and Scotch historians; nor can we doubt

*doubt of the fidelity of his quotations; as he had a good opportunity of consulting the originals, and he ought not to be supposed to have neglected that precaution.* The present editor has compared what that Father wrote, with the *Saints Lives*, which we have from Chalmers, Challoner and Butler. He has also consulted the *Chronicle of Mailros*, Matthew Paris, and Hector Boece. He has made particular use of the annals of Scotland, by the late Lord Hailes, who may be depended upon, as one of the most accurate historical critics, that ever Scotland produced. To enter into chronological disquisitions has not been thought necessary, nor even suitable to our present purpose; as our little work is designed for the perusal of all classes of readers.

We may observe that this Saint had great connections not only with the Northern, but likewise with the Southern part of Britain. She drew her origin from the English Saxon Kings; and as her brother Edgar is not known to have left any children, her posterity must be considered as the lineal representatives of those Saxon Monarchs. She spent twelve years of her life in England, and was there confirmed in the practice of virtue; the English Emigrants of all ranks, who fled from the oppression of the Norman Conqueror, met with a very kind reception from her and her husband. Her daughter Matilda was admired in England as one of their most holy Queens. From all this it is hoped, that this performance, if but tolerably well executed, will not be unacceptable in England.

If any Protestant shall happen to read this little piece, he will meet with an account of several practices, which differ from what has prevailed in Britain for some time past. At this he will not be surprised, when he reflects, that Margaret lived seven hundred

*hundred years ago, and was a Catholic, that being the only religion professed then in this island, and in all the neighbouring kingdoms. Without mentioning these practices, a just idea could not have been given of this Queen's character. Many will be well pleased to learn what our ancestors thought, and how they acted, so many centuries ago ; and all persons of candour will endeavour to judge of those things without prejudice.*

*It is the earnest wish of the Editor, that his endeavours may contribute to increase a just veneration of St. Margaret, to the edification of the reader, and, above all, to the glory of God.*

---

## THE CONTENTS.

<i>Chap.</i>		<i>Page.</i>
I.	Of her Origin and of the occasion of her being born in Hungary. - - - - -	7
II.	Of her coming with her Parents into England, and of her stay there. - - - - -	10
III.	Of her arrival in Scotland, and marriage with King Malcolm. - - - - -	15
IV.	Of her choice of a Spiritual Director, and her dependence on his advice. - - - - -	19
V.	Of the regulation of her Court, and the inducing of her Husband to a pious life. - - - - -	21
VI.	Of her getting Abuses redressed. - - - - -	25
VII.	Of the Education of her Children. - - - - -	28
VIII.	Of her Charity to the Poor. - - - - -	31
IX.	Of her Faith, Humility, Hope, her love of God and of her other virtues. - - - - -	34
X.	Of her last Sickness and Death. - - - - -	43
XI.	Of the veneration paid to her after her Death. - - - - -	47
XII.	A short account of her Children. - - - - -	53

---

THE  
LIFE  
OF  
St. MARGARET, Queen of Scotland.

---

CHAP. I.

*Of her Origin, and the Occasion of her being born  
in Hungary.*

AMONG all the remarkable persons who have lived in Scotland, there is not perhaps one who better deserves to be remembered by the natives of this kingdom with gratitude and veneration, than Margaret, the wife of Malcolm, the Third King of that name. Her eminent virtues were highly beneficial to church and state, not only during the almost thirty years that she was queen; but also, by their happy influence, for a long time after her death. As we intend to give here an account of her life, we must begin by observing, that though she drew her origin from England, yet she was born in Hungary, by a concurrence of events, which we shall briefly relate.

After a destructive and bloody war between the Danes, who had invaded England, and the Anglo-Saxons, who had been in possession of it for several hundreds of years, a peace was concluded in the year 1017, the principal condition of which was, that the kingdom should be divided into two parts, whereof one was given to the Danes, under Canute their King, and the other was left to Edmund, surnamed Ironside, and the Anglo-Saxons\*. But it could not be expected, that this

\* W. Malm. p. 72.

division would be of long duration ; because the Danes aimed at having the whole, and the Saxons no less eagerly wished to recover what they had lost. An occasion soon occurred, which enabled Canute to make himself master of all England.—Count Edric treacherously killed Edmund; and as his two sons Edmund and Edward were but very young, Canute, partly by threats, partly by promises, obtained the government of what belonged to these young princes, pretending that he would restore it to them when they should come to the age of maturity†; but his real design was, to secure the whole dominions, that had formed the Saxon Heptarchy, to himself and his posterity. This, he foresaw, could not be well effected, as long as the lawful heirs of the Saxon kings were alive. He therefore resolved to get rid of Edmund and Edward at any rate. He did not indeed choose to embrue his hands in their blood openly, as this would have rendered him detestable; but he sent them, under some specious pretence, to Volgar, who was governor for him of a part of Sweden, with secret orders to make away with them, in some private manner‡. Volgar was shocked at this inhuman proposal; was moved to compassion for the young princes, who were innocent and amiable; and though out of fear of Canute's resentment, he made him believe that his command had been obeyed, yet he saved the two Saxon youths; and after having kept them concealed in Sweden for some time, he sent them to the king of Hungary, with whom he had some correspondence, and in whose humanity he had justly placed a great confidence||. The king who then reigned in Hungary was St. Stephen, as Papebroch with

will said before said on blood it and reason

† Hoveden, p. 436. Sim. Dun. p. 175, &c. ‡ Chr. Sax. p. 150. || W. Malm. p. 73. Sim. Dun. p. 176. Chron. Maili. p. 155.

reason makes it§. This Stephen was the first who bore the name of king in that country, having received the regal crown sent to him by Pope Sylvester II. in the year 1000, after which he reigned 36 years, and made his kingdom flourish in every respect. He was wise, valiant, and remarkably pious; and he laboured so much for the conversion of his subjects to the Christian faith, that he is considered as the Apostle of the Hungarians; and from this it is, that their kings, even at this day, are addressed with the title of Apostolic Majesty. He is honoured as a saint by the church, and his name is inserted in the Roman kalendar on the 2d of September. To this holy person the sons of Edmund Ironside were sent, happily for them; for he not only received them with all kindness, but took care to get them educated in learning, virtue, piety, and in like manner as if they had been his own children.—He had all reason to be satisfied with their behaviour and progress; and they became very dear to the whole court\*. Edmund died in the flower of his age. Edward distinguished himself so much, that he obtained in marriage Agatha, a German princess, who probably was, as Papebroch conjectures, a daughter of Bruno, brother to the emperor Henry II. and consequently a niece of Gisela, queen of Hungary, and wife to St. Stephen. Of this marriage was born one son, Edgar, who was afterwards in England surnamed Etheling, and two daughters, Christina, who became a nun, and Margaret, of whom principally we treat†. She was born about the year 1046, and that probably at Alba the Royal, where the

B 2      kings

§ Papebroch ad vit. S. Marg. 10 Jun. \* Sur. 10 Jun. Theod. Act. Sanct. Bol. land. 10 Jun. Anton. bon. fin. Hist. Rer. Hungar. dec. 2. l. 2. Math. Par. p. 94.  
† Aelred de gen. Reg. Ang. p. 366. Papebroch vit. SS. 10 Jun.

kings of Hungary then commonly resided. She was endued by God with many excellent natural qualities of mind and body; and the happy effects of a plentiful share of his supernatural grace on her soul began to appear very early. Her pious parents, on their part, took the greatest care, that she should see or hear nothing, but what was edifying; and they instilled into her mind the best principles of virtue and religion, as soon as she was capable of receiving any such impressions.— The correspondence of Margaret, with these inward and outward helps, was fully as great as could have been expected. She was remarkable for modesty, mildness of temper, and a great benevolence of disposition. She was respectful, obedient and docile to her parents, and to all her instructors. She showed a great inclination to prayer, to the reading of the Scripture and other good books, and indeed to every thing that tended to the service of God, whom she evidently feared to offend, and loved with her whole heart. Thus, in her infancy and childhood was seen the pleasant dawn of that eminent virtue and holiness, which afterwards shone with so resplendent lustre during the whole remainder of her life; and this is almost all that can be said of her first nine years which she passed in Hungary\*.

---

## CHAP. II.

*Of her coming, with her Parents, into England; and of her Stay there.*

IN the meantime, some considerable changes had happened in England, which paved the way for the return thither of Edward her father. After

Canute

\* Theod. Act. Sanct. 10 Jun.

Canute had become master of that whole kingdom, he governed in such a manner as made him appear truly worthy to reign. He was very sensible, that it was his interest, as well as his duty, to make his subjects contented and happy; and he endeavoured to do so very effectually. He continued to rule them, in great prosperity, until his death, in the year 1036. He was succeeded in England by his son Harold, who died within three years, and after him his brother Hardicnute was king until the year 1041. As the reigns of these two last princes were short and weak, the old English recovered so much the ascendancy over the Danes, that they insisted on placing on the throne a king of their own ancient royal family. This they obtained the more easily, because they had one in view who had acquired a great reputation for virtue, wisdom, and justice. The person proposed was Edward, known afterwards by the name of St. Edward the Confessor, to distinguish him from St. Edward the Martyr. He was brother by the same father to Edmund Ironside, and consequently he was uncle to Edward, whom we have left in Hungary. He had been carried, when young, to Normandy, that he might be safe from the wicked designs of Canute, and had received the best education that the times could afford, and had profited by it, and learned much in the school of adversity. He was now invited over to govern the kingdom of his ancestors, which invitation he accepted of, not out of the spirit of ambition, but out of a real desire of procuring the good of his country, and was crowned King, at Easter, in the year 1042. Never did a sovereign behave in a more fatherly manner to his people, than he did; never was any people more

more full of respect, love, and readines to obey a sovereign, than the English were to him. Hence afterwards, in the nation, that great desire of seeing again such times as those of the Confessor: hence their constant petition of enjoying the Confessor's laws. It must be here observed, that according to the strict hereditary right of primogeniture, the crown of England ought to have been given, not to St. Edward the Confessor, but to Edward, who was son to the Confessor's elder brother. However the nephew was at a distance, and not known in England; whereas the uncle was nearer at hand, and esteemed even by the Danes. The opportunity of getting a king of their own nation was not to be let slip by the English; nor an affair of that importance exposed to be disconcerted by delays\*. Besides, in those ages, it was not unusual in monarchies, otherwise hereditary, for an uncle to ascend the throne in place of his nephew, the lineal heir, when this nephew was a minor, in order to prevent the inconveniences that commonly attend the minorities of sovereigns. In the year 1057, (and why this was not done sooner, we are ignorant) the Confessor sent Aldred Bishop of Worcester to Hungary, with presents to Edward, and to those who had been so much his friends there and in Germany, and with a pressing invitation to him to come home to his native country. Edward saw how much this was the interest of his family, and his own; and therefore, taking leave of his friends and benefactors, he came to Britain with his wife and three children. He was also attended by several Hungarians of distinction, who either were attached to him by affection, or were in hopes of bettering their fortunes by being with him, who had so near a prospect

\* W. Malm. p. 8.

spect to the crown of England†. The Confessor received them with the greatest goodness; and it is said, by some, that he offered to resign the government to his nephew; but his nephew would not consent to take the reins out of his hands, who managed them so well\*. — Margaret now made her appearance at the English court, and as piety was there much regarded, she gained the esteem of every body. She continued to advance in the way to christian perfection, into which she had so happily entered. She was very punctual in the performance of all the duties of her state; and she employed much time in reading, in charitable works, and in conversing with her God. She knew to despise the world, in the midst of its allurements, having her heart fixed only on the goods of eternity. She had two excellent models set before her eye, in her own mother, and in Editha, the Confessor's queen. Her father died not very long after their arrival in England; and this great loss she bore with that resignation, which she afterwards so much recommended to her children‡. St. Edward her grand uncle likewise departed this life in the beginning of the year 1066. This event made her brother Edgar the nearest rightful heir to the English throne; but Harold, son to Earl Godwin, pretending that the Confessor had bequeathed the kingdom to him; and by other arts got himself declared king, to the exclusion of Edgar, who was rather a stranger in England, and likewise much a stranger to ambitious practices. Harold did not, however, long enjoy the fruit of his ambition; for, in the following autumn, William Duke of Normandy, who changed the surname of *Bastard* into

† H. Hunt. p. 366. Ingolf. p. 66. Chron. Mailr. 158. \* Boece, I. xii. § 1.  
256. ‡ Chr. Sax. p. 169.

into that of *Conqueror*, pretending likewise that the kingdom had been left by the Confessor to him, came over with a great army, to assert what he called his right. In October a bloody battle was fought at Hastings, in which Harold was slain, and William was completely victorious. Some of the English nobles and bishops, foreseeing that the Norman would probably oppress the nation, resolved to make further resistance to his arms; and for that purpose chose for their head Prince Edgar, who, besides his right to the crown, was much beloved on account of the comeliness of his person and the mildness of his temper; so that it was then a common saying, *Edgar Etheling, England's Darling*. But William, being afraid of a great opposition, and being no less cunning than brave, found means to disunite them by bribes and fair promises, and thus rendered their designs abortive. Finding himself in this manner almost entirely master of the kingdom, he discovered plainly his intentions of rewarding his Normans with all the lands, and with all the honourable and lucrative employments in church and state. The English were now treated by him with great harshness; some of them retreated to the mountains and forests; others fled to Wales, others to Britanny or Denmark; and many of them took refuge in Scotland. Edgar and his mother Agatha, seeing very well, that, whatever the Conqueror might pretend, there was no security for them in England, formed a resolution of returning to Hungary, where they had all reason to expect a kind reception. This was what they intended; but Providence had another design with regard to them.

## C H A P. III.

*Of her Arrival in Scotland, and Marriage with  
King Malcolm.*

EDGAR therefore, seeing that he could not assert his right to the crown of England, thought it safest and most prudent to retire. And with the advice of Agatha his mother, he got a ship prepared, and conveying on board the same all their valuable effects that could be removed in that manner, he, together with his said mother, his two sisters, and many Hungarian and English attendants, set sail for the continent. But a violent tempest arose, and drove them northward to the coasts of Scotland, where they entered the Firth of Forth, and with difficulty landed at the place, which from this circumstance got the name of the *Queen's Port*, and has since been called *St. Margaret's Hope* \*.

At that time Malcolm III. farnamed *Keanmore*, (*Great Head*) was king of Scotland, and happened to be at Dunfermling, at no great distance, when these illustrious strangers arrived. He being informed of the event, hastened to receive them with the greatest sympathy and kindness, conducted them to his residence at Dumfermling, and treated them in the best manner that was possible for him.† To this he was prompted not only by the quality of these strangers and his own hospitable disposition ; but also by the grateful remembrance of the great favours that had been conferred on him by their near relation Saint Edward. For, after Macbeth had killed King Duncan his father, and usurped the sovereignty in

C Scotland,

\* Chr. Sax. p. 174. Sim. Dan. p. 197. Chron. Mail. p. 158. Fordun l. v. c. 16. Aedred. de gen. Engl. p. 367. Hoveden p. 226. Matth. Par. p. 5. Vit. 23, S. Alb. Abb. p. 48. Boece, l. xii. fol. 257. † Chron. Mailr. p. 160. H. Hunt, p. 369. Hoveden, p. 450, 452.

Scotland, Malcolm had been obliged to retire into England, and had been entertained by the Confessor for several years; nay he had received from him the assistance of 10,000 men under the command of Siward Earl of Northumberland, who entering Scotland and being joined by Macduff, Earl of Fife, and the other loyalists, defeated the usurper, who was soon after slain.‡ In consequence of this victory Malcolm had been placed on the throne. Very mindful therefore of what he owed to St. Edward, he was now glad to have it in his power to repay it in the persons of his grand-nephew, and his family, who were now in a distressed situation like to that, which he himself had experienced.

But another more strict connection very soon took place. Margaret was now more than twenty years of age, and of a superior beauty, which was greatly enhanced by her decency and propriety of manners, and by her agreeableness in conversation. Malcolm therefore became desirous of having her for his royal consort, and made this proposal to her and to her mother.—She herself had no relish for wordly grandeur, and wished rather to dedicate herself to God in religious retirement. But Agatha represented to her, how advantageous such a match would be to them in their present condition, and likewise took notice how much more she might contribute to the glory of her God, and to the good of her fellow creatures, when seated on a throne, than she could, if hidden in a cloister. Margaret perceiving the weight of these considerations, and being full of respectful obedience to her mother, gave her consent, and was married to Malcolm, to the great joy of the whole kingdom.

‡ Fordun, l. v. cap. 7.

dom.\* Historians vary in assigning the year of this event so fortunate for Scotland. Some place it in 1067, a few months after William conquered England, some again in 1068; some defer it until 1070. It is not easy, nor at all necessary to reconcile these differences. The marriage, and the happy consequences of it, are certain.

We have said, that Agatha and her children were attended by several Hungarians. Our historians tell us, that amongst these were the progenitors of those who assumed the surnames of Drummond, Leslie, Crichton, Fotheringham, Maul, Borthwick. All our writers both English and Scotch agree that many English families took refuge in Scotland about that time.† Of these Boece mentions the ancestors of the Maxwells, Lindsays, Vaux, Ramsays, Lovels, Tours, Prestons, Sandilands, Bissets, Soulis, Wardlaws; but on what authority we know not.‡

This great influx of English, especially of those who were of the better sort, and who fled from the oppression of the Norman, and were made welcome by Malcolm and his Queen, is one of the principal causes of the introduction of the English Tongue into a great part of Scotland. What we call the *Broad Scotch* is a dialect of the Saxon or Old English, with a mixture of Gaelic, the ancient language of the country, and of French, occasioned by the intercourse between the Scotch and French nations, in the middle ages.§

The reception given to the Princess Agatha and her children, could not fail to be disagreeable to the new King of England. Accordingly William sent to demand them, and on Malcolm's refusal

\* Theod. Aft. Sanct. 10 Jun. Sur. 10 Jun. Boece. Leslie l. 6. Boece, l. xii  
fol. 257. † Malmes. p. 103. Mat. Paris, p. 4. ‡ Boece, l. xii. fol. 258. § Ibid.

refusal a war ensued. ‘The Scots,’ to make use of the words of Mr Butler, ‘defeated Roger, a Norman General, in Northumberland; and afterwards Richard, Earl of Gloucester. Upon which William sent his brother Odo Earl of Kent into Northumberland; but Malcolm gave him a considerable overthrow, and recovered the booty which he had taken. After this, the haughty Norman sent his son Robert, at the head of an army, who encamped on the Tyne, but without doing any thing, except building the city of Newcastle. Soon after, the Norman agreed to a peace, on these conditions; that he should restore Sibert, Earl of Northumberland, and leave Cumberland, as formerly, to the Scotch; that he should treat Prince Edgar as his friend; and that the boundaries of the two kingdoms should be King’s Cross on Stanemoor, between Richmondshire and Cumberland, which should have the statues and arms of the two Kings of England and Scotland on each side\*.’ For the space of 27 years Malcolm defended his kingdom against William and his son, with great valour and prudence. The English historians indeed complain bitterly of the cruelties committed in the incursions which he made into their country; nor was it possible for him to restrain his followers from many irregularities. Destructive inroads were by far too frequent on both sides, as long as the two kingdoms were separated: Such calamities are now happily removed, and many mutual advantages obtained by their union.

CHAP.

\* Butler, SS. LL. Jun. 10.

## C H A P. IV.

*Of her Choice of a Spiritual Director, and her Dependence on his Advice.*

MArgaret seeing herself now placed by providence in a most important station, was resolved, with the divine assistance, to fulfil the obligations of it well, and to make use of all proper means for that purpose. She was sensible, that to have a pious, prudent, and zealous Director of one's conscience is a circumstance very desirable to persons of all ranks, who wish to attain to christian perfection; but that this becomes still more necessary, when the dangers are greater and more frequent, and the duties more various and of greater consequence. Her natural parts and her acquired abilities were both far above the common: but like all humble souls, she was very diffident of herself. She had indeed a lively confidence in God; but she knew that this did not free her from being obliged to use the ordinary means appointed by Christ for obtaining advice and direction. Wherefore one of her earnest petitions to heaven was, that she might find a spiritual guide, willing and able to give her the aid she stood in need of; and her petition was favourably heard. Turgot, Abbot of the Benedictine convent in Durham, was her confessor, at least for several years, and he has also written an account of her life.

He was a native of England, and for some time was employed in teaching sacred literature to Olaus the holy King of Norway, who was afterwards crowned with martyrdom.—The example of that King began to wean the heart of Turgot from the world; and his being shipwrecked on his way home, with the loss of all his

his effects, and the danger of being swallowed up in the waves, made him determine to retire into the monastery of Durham, where under the direction of Aldwin, who then ruled it in a most edifying manner, he made such proficiency in virtue and learning, that, after his master's death, he was appointed his successor. He was also in the end raised to the see of St. Andrew's; but this happened a good many years after. Here we speak of him as the director of St. Margaret.†

She having all reason to think, that she had found a proper guide, and confiding, that God by his means would conduct her in the way of her duty, was not content with making her sacramental confession to him; but also acquainted him, with all candour, with the whole state of her soul; manifesting to him the inclinations she felt in herself, the passions, to which she thought herself most subject, her desires, her habits, the difficulties she experienced, her good resolutions, and her practices of piety. She assured him, that she was most willing to amend her faults, and most earnestly begged of him to observe them, like a rigorous judge, and to inform her of them without reserve. She declared to him that she was very desirous of discharging herself perfectly of all her obligations, and that she expected, that he would seriously think of them, and always put her in mind of what she ought to do, for the sanctification of her own soul, and for the good of her family, and of all her subjects.

The holy man was agreeable surprized to find so great purity of conscience, so much prudent zeal, and so sublime sentiments of devotion in a Princess, who had always lived in the world.— He did his utmost endeavour to assist her in the

ac-

† Sur. 10 Jun. Lefl. 1. 6.

accomplishment of her virtuous designs. But she often complained that he was too indulgent to her, and too sparing in reproofing her for her omissions, and other offences in words and actions.‡ They concerted together what was proper to be done by her ; and with his advice, by the grace of God, and her constant compliance with both, she regulated her court, she brought her husband to a pious life, she got the abuses in church and state reformed, she educated her children well, and practised all the virtues suitable to her state with great perfection ; as we shall now proceed to relate, more in particular.

---

C H A P. V.*Of the Regulation of her Court, and the inducing of her Husband to a pious Life.*

OUR Saint immediately turned her charitable attention to those who attended her, and to all her servants ; but in a particular manner, as was just, to the King her husband. Those who are placed by God in such a situation, as to have the weight of authority, are certainly obliged to make use of its influence for promoting his divine glory, and the real good of those under their care. This was well understood by St. Margaret, who had likewise had, for some years, a good model under her eyes, in the court of St. Edward and the holy Editha. Her fervent charity made her comply with her duty in this respect, with the greatest alacrity and diligence ; and she was the more desirous to have every thing well regulated around herself, as she was not ignorant, that the example would be readily followed. By her advice, given in the most prudent and engaging man-

‡ Surius 10 Jun. Theod. A&T. Sanct. 10 Jun.

manner, by reproof when it was necessary, accompanied with charity, and especially by her own virtuous behaviour and edifying conversation, she by degrees extirpated all appearance of vice from the palace, and rendered virtue fashionable.—

‘ By her prudent zeal and example’ says Butler, ‘ concord, charity, modesty, religion, and piety, ‘ reigned in the whole court, in which virtue was ‘ the only recommendation to the royal favour, ‘ and to want devotion, was the most certain ‘ disgrace.’ We may here add, that she took care, that the ladies about her should never be idle. They were often employed in needle work, and that for the most part in preparing ornaments for the altar.

But being sensible how much depended upon the King’s behaviour, and having the warmest affection for him, her chief aim was, to bring him to a truly pious manner of life †.— Malcolm was rough and unpolished, and was not free from vice; but he had a solid judgment, a good heart, and many excellent natural qualities. One action of his is recorded by the best English and Scotch historians, which may be related here, as it gives some insight into his character. After he had been some years on the throne, he got certain information of a dangerous conspiracy formed against his life. Upon this, he invited his Nobles to a hunting match, and among them the chief conspirator attended, according to his expectation. In the field, Malcolm took an opportunity of entering into conversation with him, drew him by degrees into a wood, where they were seen by nobody. Here the King let him know that he was fully acquainted with his treacherous design; ‘ but, added he, if I have

‘ wronged

† Theod. Act. Sanct. 10 Jun.

wronged you, do not think of killing me in a cowardly way, when I am asleep ; but rather seek satisfaction now, when I am ready to give it, in an honourable manner, and on equal terms. If you imagine, that you are more worthy to reign than I am, show that you are so, at present, by your valour.' The conspirator, struck with astonishment at this greatness of soul, threw himself from his horse, fell on his knee, and said to the King, that if he pleased, he might immediately punish him for his guilt, which he acknowledged ; but that if he would vouchsafe to spare and pardon him, he would be one of his most faithful subjects, as long as he should breathe.— Malcolm, after a very short struggle with his resentment, assured him generously, that his crime should never be remembered to his prejudice ; and it appears, that both of them kept their word.\*

Malcolm soon perceived what a valuable treasure he was so happy as to possess in his wife and virtuous consort ; and she, with a most laudable view, made it her study to endear herself to him still more and more. By conversing with her on moral subjects, he saw how detestable vice is, and how amiable the practice of virtue. Having gained this much, and imploring the aid of heaven, she took an opportunity to speak to him, in the strongest but most affectionate terms, concerning his salvation. She represented to him the importance of eternity, the strict account that we have to give of our actions, and the much that depended on his behaviour, with regard to his family and his whole kingdom. He hearkened to her with attention, and was convinced of the truth of what she said, and of the real concern for his welfare, with which she had spoken.

D

The

\* Acted gen. reg. Angl. p. 367. Matth. Par. p. 15.

The inward grace of God was not wanting, and his answer was such, as filled her heart with joy, and made her sure of having succeeded in her charitable undertaking. He amended his life without delay. By her advice he regulated his family, educated his children, and governed his people. He became her companion in her works of charity, when the affairs of state permitted it; he joined with her in her devotions, and often rose along with her to assist with the Monks at the midnight office \*.

The virtue of Margaret was prudent and discreet, and therefore she attended to what was becoming her station, and the necessary splendor of a court. She increased the number of attendants, and made the Royal Family be served at table in gold and silver vessels, or in such as were gilt, or silvered over. She required modesty in dress; but introduced finer clothes, than had been used before in Scotland, and her historian mentions some, that were remarkable for the variety of colours †. Hence the late Lord Hailes conjectures, that perhaps we owe to her the introduction of what we call *Tartan* †. All this St. Margaret did, not out of vanity or ostentation; but to create respect to superiors, and mark the distinction of ranks. From the same principle, founded on the very nature of man, in all civilized nations particular robes and ornaments have been appropriated to almost all offices, whether civil, military or ecclesiastical.

CHAP.

\* Theod. Act. Sanct. 10 Jun. Sur. 10 Jun. Boece, l. xii. fol. 259. † Theod. Act. Sanct. Bolland ad 10 Jun. p. 330. † Hailes' Ann. Scot. vol. i. p. 37.

## C H A P. VI.

*Of her getting Abuses redressed.*

THE regularity, which was observed in the behaviour of those who lived in the royal palace, and the exemplary change in the manners of the King, made the Queen be highly esteemed, and had a happy effect on the morals of many throughout the nation. But there were several abuses to be redressed, which had crept in during the civil wars that had raged, and during Macbeth's long usurpation. Margaret was persuaded that God required of her that she should use her best endeavours to remove these abuses; and she hoped for success from the help of heaven, and from the concurrence of her husband, whose confidence she had entirely gained.

Malcolm, at her desire, called a general council of the principal ecclesiastics and of his nobility; and though it was not usual for persons of her sex to appear in such assemblies, and though she was far from entertaining any sentiments of self-conceit; yet she saw that the circumstances required her declaring in person, what she wished to be remedied. The king approved much of this proposal; and as she did not as yet speak the Gaelic well, and he spoke both it, his native tongue, and the Saxon perfectly, he was pleased to be her interpreter.

When all were assembled, Margaret made to them an introductory discourse, on the cause and the necessity of their being come together. She then mentioned a practice that prevailed in Scotland, of beginning Lent on the Monday of the sixth week before Easter, and not on the preceding Wednesday, with the rest of the church. Now, although there had been some varieties in the time

The inward grace of God was not wanting, and his answer was such, as filled her heart with joy, and made her sure of having succeeded in her charitable undertaking. He amended his life without delay. By her advice he regulated his family, educated his children, and governed his people. He became her companion in her works of charity, when the affairs of state permitted it; he joined with her in her devotions, and often rose along with her to assist with the Monks at the midnight office \*.

The virtue of Margaret was prudent and discreet, and therefore she attended to what was becoming her station, and the necessary splendor of a court. She increased the number of attendants, and made the Royal Family be served at table in gold and silver vessels, or in such as were gilt, or silvered over. She required modesty in dress; but introduced finer clothes, than had been used before in Scotland, and her historian mentions some, that were remarkable for the variety of colours †. Hence the late Lord Hailes conjectures, that perhaps we owe to her the introduction of what we call *Tartan* †. All this St. Margaret did, not out of vanity or ostentation; but to create respect to superiors, and mark the distinction of ranks. From the same principle, founded on the very nature of man, in all civilized nations particular robes and ornaments have been appropriated to almost all offices, whether civil, military or ecclesiastical.

CHAP.

\* Theod. Ad. Sanct. 10 Jun. Sur. 10 Jun. Boece, l. xii. fol. 259. † Theod. Ad. Sanct. Bolland ad 10 Jun. p. 330. † Hailes' Ann. Scot. vol. i. p. 37.

## C H A P. VI.

*Of her getting Abuses redressed.*

THE regularity, which was observed in the behaviour of those who lived in the royal palace, and the exemplary change in the manners of the King, made the Queen be highly esteemed, and had a happy effect on the morals of many throughout the nation. But there were several abuses to be redressed, which had crept in during the civil wars that had raged, and during Macbeth's long usurpation. Margaret was persuaded that God required of her that she should use her best endeavours to remove these abuses; and she hoped for success from the help of heaven, and from the concurrence of her husband, whose confidence she had entirely gained.

Malcolm, at her desire, called a general council of the principal ecclesiastics and of his nobility; and though it was not usual for persons of her sex to appear in such assemblies, and though she was far from entertaining any sentiments of self-conceit; yet she saw that the circumstances required her declaring in person, what she wished to be remedied. The king approved much of this proposal; and as she did not as yet speak the Gaelic well, and he spoke both it, his native tongue, and the Saxon perfectly, he was pleased to be her interpreter.

When all were assembled, Margaret made to them an introductory discourse, on the cause and the necessity of their being come together. She then mentioned a practice that prevailed in Scotland, of beginning Lent on the Monday of the sixth week before Easter, and not on the preceding Wednesday, with the rest of the church. Now, although there had been some varieties in the

time

time of beginning the Anti-paschal Fast; yet, as the western church had, for several centuries before this period, generally begun that fast on the Wednesday in the seventh week before the Paschal solemnity; Margaret insisted, that as Scotland, ever from its conversion to Christianity, had agreed with the universal church in all matters of faith, so it should likewise agree with her in this observance: and after some reasoning it was determined that what she proposed should be done for the future\*.

After this, a much more pernicious abuse came to be considered. It was a great neglect in observing the Lord's day, and other days set apart for the service of God, and for the instruction of the people. All allowed, that this neglect was very contrary to the laws of God and of the church; and it was resolved that measures should be taken for preventing it in the time to come.

In the third place, the queen took notice, that many omitted, long, the receiving the blessed Sacrament, and did not approach to the altar for that purpose, even at the feast of Easter. She shewed that the pretext of respect to our Saviour, and of their being unworthy, was not a sufficient excuse for their not receiving the food of the life of the soul; that they ought to prepare themselves by a sincere repentance, and then make use of that so effectual means of obtaining divine grace, in order to abstain from sin, and advance in virtue. It was likewise resolved to pay due attention to this injunction.

Incestuous marriages with one's step mother and with a brother's widow, in which interest probably was studied, had been permitted.—These were strictly prohibited. Regulations were

also

\* Theod. Act. Sanct. Bolland. 10 Jun. Boece, Lefl.

also made for correcting some improprieties in the celebration of the divine mysteries, for restraining injustice, intemperance and lust, and for encouraging the contrary virtues. Whatever the Queen proposed was so reasonable in itself, and was spoken by her in so engaging a manner, that it was all unanimously approved.

She was however sensible, that it is not enough to prescribe salutary rules; but that it is still more essential to see that they be put into execution. That this might be done, she induced her husband to take care, that upon every vacancy, the most proper persons should be promoted to the episcopal sees of St. Andrew's, Gallo-way, Glasgow and Mortlach, (which last was afterwards translated to Aberdeen). And as these four appeared to be too few, by her advice, he added two more to that number, by founding those of Murray and Caithness, for the northern parts of the Kingdom\*. For the instruction of the people she procured zealous preachers to be sent every where, and she got them supported by the royal authority. Thus religion was protected and encouraged by the temporal government; and government was revered and obeyed by the help of religion. The subjects were consequently civilized, and they enjoyed greater safety, peace and happiness than they had ever before experienced.

There was nothing tending to render man more dutiful to his Creator, that escaped the attention of the pious Margaret. It is said, that she having learned that many neglected to give due thanks after meals to their heavenly Benefactor, to prevent this neglect, in an easy and pleasant manner introduced a practice of drinking a health

at

\* Boece, l. xii. fol. 459.

at rising from table, to those who had complied with that duty. Hence this was called the *Grace Drink, or St. Margaret's Blessing.*

The effects of all her charitable endeavours were such as gave her great satisfaction, and gave just reason to the learned Baronius to say: 'That the having found the church of Scotland like a wild desert, left it at her death in so flourishing a state, that it resembled a well cultivated beautiful garden\*.'

### C H A P. VII.

#### *Of the Education of her Children.*

OUR Saint knew well what an important trust God had confided to her, in her children, and how much depended on their good behaviour. She therefore bestowed all care and attention on their education. What she did in this respect is so well expressed, by the truly worthy Mr Butler, that we cannot do better than copy what he has written on that subject. 'God blessed this pious royal couple (Malcolm and Margaret) with a numerous and virtuous offspring, which did not degenerate from the piety of their holy parents. The Queen was mother of six boys; Edward, Ethelred, Edmund, Edgar, Alexander and David, and of two daughters, namely Maud or Mathildes, married to Henry I. King of England, and Mary who married Eustace, Count of Boulogne. Of the sons, Edgar, Alexander and David successively came to the crown of Scotland; and all governed with the highest reputation of wisdom, valour and piety, especially King David, who may be justly styled the brightest ornament of that throne. The happiness

\* Baron. Hist. Eccl. ad An. 1097.

• pines of these Princes, and that of their whole  
• kingdom in them, was owing, under God, to  
• the pious care of Queen Margaret in their edu-  
• cation. She did not suffer them to be brought  
• up in vanity, pride or pleasures, which is too  
• often the misfortune of those who are born in  
• courts. She inspired them with an early in-  
• difference to the things of the world, with the  
• greatest ardour for virtue, the purest love of  
• God, fear of his judgments, and dread of sin.  
• She chose for them the ablest preceptors and  
• governors, persons eminently endued with the  
• spirit of piety and religion, and would suffer  
• none but such to approach them, being sensi-  
• ble that tender minds receive the strongest and  
• most lasting impressions from the behaviour of  
• those with whom they converse, especially  
• masters. Instructions are dry, but the words  
• and actions of persons breathe the spirit and  
• sentiments of their hearts, and insensibly com-  
• municate the same to others, especially where  
• this influence is strengthened by authority.  
• The zealous mother watched over the masters,  
• examined the progress of her children, and of-  
• ten instructed them herself in all christian  
• duties. No sooner were the young Princesses  
• of an age capable of profiting by her example,  
• than she made them her companions, in all  
• her spiritual exercises and good works. She  
• daily by most fervent prayers and tears, con-  
• jured Almighty God, to preserve their inno-  
• cence, and fill their souls with the sentiments  
• of those virtues which she endeavoured to  
• instill into them\*. Thus far Butler, from the  
• original authors.

Nor did she fail, during her life, to inculcate to  
these

these her dear children, on all proper occasions, the six maxims which she recommended to them in a particular manner, when she was going to leave them and the world. The maxims were, 1. That they should be willing to die a thousand times, rather than once to offend God grievously, which would deprive them of his grace, and expose them to endless misery. 2. That they should make a perfect sacrifice of their minds and hearts to the blessed Trinity, the great object of christian adoration; and that they should have a singular reverence to the Mother of our Saviour, and a great confidence in her intercession, so powerful with God. 3. That they should love and protect the poor, as their own brethren. 4. That they should shun with horror all shadow of sins against chastity, with more care than they would avoid the infection of a mortal distemper. 5. That they should often ask and follow the advice of holy and pious men. Lastly, That they should be constant and inflexible in maintaining the Catholic faith, which had been so long happily held by their ancestors \*.

That it may appear, how very successful our saint was in this most important affair of educating her children, we shall give a brief account of them before we come to an end. We shall here only observe, that to this virtuous education given by Margaret to her sons, is to be attributed, in a great measure, that Scotland was governed for the space of 200 years, by seven excellent Kings, that is, by her three sons, Edgar, Alexander, David; David's two grandsons, Malcolm IV. and William; and by William's son and grandson, Alexander II. and III.; during which space the nation enjoyed greater happiness, than it ever

perhaps

perhaps did before or after: and this happiness might have been continued much longer, had it not been interrupted by the unfortunate disputed succession to the crown, between Baliol and Bruce, which happened towards the close of the 13th century. This also shews how great a blessing a good mother may be to any family, of whatever degree.

### C H A P. VIII.

#### *Of her Charity to the Poor.*

A Sincere and active love of God animated the whole conduct of Margaret, and excited her to the practice of all the christian virtues; but among these her charity to her fellow-creatures in poverty and distress seems to have been particularly conspicuous. She considered attentively what our Saviour has told us, in the description he has given, in the gospel, of the last judgment, where he is to reward or punish according to the performance or neglect of that duty, having declared, that he receives what is done to our neighbours as done to himself. — Hence she always thought, that she could never do enough to serve him, who had done and suffered so much for us, in them whom he had substituted in his place.

The pleasant news of their having so bountiful a Queen was soon spread through the whole kingdom, and numbers of indigent persons flock'd to Dunfermling and Edinburgh, where she commonly resided; and there they met with a reception, that far exceeded all that they could have expected.

We are informed by the author of her life, that every morning she made six poor people of the most loathsome, to be brought into the

palace, where throwing herself at their feet, she washed them, and, after having done so, kissed them several times, with the same tenderness as she would have used towards Christ himself, whose person she honoured in that of his members.— She also gave a liberal alms to every one of those poor persons. Going thence into another apartment, she found there nine orphan children, brought thither likewise by her orders ; these she fed with her own royal hands, to the astonishment and great edification of the beholders. She did the same to twenty four grown-up poor persons before dinner. Often, especially in Lent and Advent, the royal couple, attended by their chaplains only, called in three hundred poor, and served them at table, she the women on one side, the King the men on the other ; giving them the same dishes that were served up at their own table\*.

From the uniform tenour of this saint's life, we may safely conclude that in all this there was nothing of hypocritical ostentation. It was necessary to have an established order in what she did ; she had a satisfaction, from supernatural motives, in overcoming the reluctance of nature, and in rendering others as contented as she could ; she also knew of what consequence her example was, and that the poor would not so readily be neglected by others, when they saw so great attention paid to them by the Queen.

Nor was her beneficence at all confined to those who came to the place of her abode. She sent out trusty persons to enquire for those who were in necessity, in order that they might be effectually relieved. She assisted widows and insolvent debtors, and took care of helpless orphans.

phans. She erected Hospitals for poor strangers and for the sick, and she herself attended the sick in them with wonderful humility and tenderness. There were at that time, as the best historians assure us, so many English captives in Scotland, that they were to be met with not only in every village, but almost in every cottage†. Of these she ransomed a great many, especially those who, she was informed, had fallen into the hands of harsh masters ; and she gave them money to bear their expences home. She was very liberal to those who had embraced the state of voluntary poverty in religious orders ; she not only cheerfully gave them what they asked of her ; but of herself sent to them that of which she thought they stood in need‡.

Oftentimes, the sum allotted to her for alms deeds, was not sufficient to satisfy the necessities that occurred to her benevolent heart. She added to it what she could possibly save, from the allowance for her own use. She even sold the jewels from her breast, and the rings from her fingers, for charitable purposes. On some occasions she took money from the royal treasury, for the like ends ; knowing well, that the King would approve of her doing so. Sometimes indeed he pretended to catch her in stealing from him, and would pleasantly say that she was a convicted thief.

She gave free and easy access to all persons, that they might lay before her their grievances, make their complaints, and present their petitions. Some implored justice, which they had not received at the tribunals ; some begged relief from the tyranny of the great ; others showed their numerous families hungry and naked, or

their

† Sim. Dun. p. 201. ‡ Theod. Act. Sanc. 10 Jun. Sur. 10 Jun.

their own bodies frozen with cold. The Queen heard them all with unspeakable patience, provided for all with the bowels of a mother, and never permitted any one to depart without help or comfort.

That this access to her might still be more easy, she is said to have frequently sitten in an open field, that there every one who pleased, might have an opportunity of speaking to her with the greater freedom: and there is still shown, something more than a mile from Dunfermline, on the way to Queensferry, a stone in the form of a seat, which, according to a constant tradition, she sometimes made use of for that purpose. It is marked in the maps of the roads that were published not long since, near to the 14th mile from Edinburgh, with the name of *St. Margaret's stone* affixed to it.

From all that we have said it appears, that the church with great reason calls her *wonderful in her charity towards the poor*, in the prayer which she addresses to God in her office on the festival of this Saint, which prayer is as follows. *O God, who hast rendered the blessed Margaret Queen of Scots, wonderful for her exquisite charity towards the poor; grant, that by her intercession and example, thy charity may be continually increased in our hearts.—Thro' our Lord Jesus, &c.*

### CHAP. IX.

*Of her Faith, Humility, Hope, her Love of God, and of her other Virtues.*

WE shall now take notice of some of the other virtues, that were most observable in the life of our saint; and this will tend to display her character

rafter the better, and give us an opportunity of mentioning some other notable particulars relating to her. We shall begin with faith, which is the foundation of all supernatural virtues ; and it enlightens the soul, and shows us what we ought to do, and why we ought to do it. Margaret's faith was firm and lively ; she judged of all things by that heavenly standard, and regulated her whole conduct accordingly. She believed, without the least shadow of doubt, all the truths and mysteries, however incomprehensible to us, which God has been pleased to reveal to man for his comfort and direction : and she hearkened with an intire submission to the catholic church, which assisted by the divine Spirit, always holds and faithfully delivers down all those truths, without any possibility of falling into error\*. This perfect adherence to the catholic faith she strongly recommended to her children, as we have seen, and to all those any way under her care. She showed her reverence to the holy see of Rome, by her asking leave of Pope Urban II. for the making use of the ceremony of anointing the Kings of Scotland with blessed oil, at their coronation ; which was first put in practice, when her son Edgar was crowned. Her posterity on the throne persevered constant in the same true religion for the space of 500 years, until another Queen, famous likewise for her excellent qualities, Mary Stewart, sealed her belief of it with her blood, and her grand father James IV. had, in the year 1507, been honoured by Julius II. with the title of *Protector of the Faith*†. With regard to Margaret, all those who observed her actions saw, that she walked by faith, and regulated

\* Theod. Act. Sanct. 10 Jun. † Lefl. l. viii.

gulated the whole of her conduct by its sacred maxims.

This faith taught her, that of herself she was nothing, that she owed to God her very being, and her existence every moment; that all the advantages of nature and fortune which she possessed, were talents entrusted by him with her, of which she had to render to him a strict account, and that without his grace, she could not form so much as one good thought. From these considerations, she gave all the glory of whatever she had or did to God alone; and would admit nothing of it to herself. Hence she not only abhorred all flattery, but also refused the praise that was due to her; as they, who attended her, well understood: nay, she was even glad, when sometimes her good actions were, by mistake or malice, blamed; because thus she became more like to our Saviour. She had a very high idea of the obligations of a christian, and was therefore always afraid of not coming nearly up to them; this made her desirous of being warned of the faults, into which she apprehended she might fall; and she always received advice and admonition in good part.— The low opinion she entertained of herself, and the example given us by our heavenly master, made her willingly exercise herself in exterior acts of humility; and we have seen, that she was pleased to perform to the poorest of her subjects, such services as the meanest servant girl would not have submitted to without reluctance†.

But tho' she had a perfect diffidence in herself, this was accompanied with a lively confidence in the divine assistance, which encouraged her to undertake great things, however difficult,

† Theod. Act. Sanct. 10 Jun.

ficult, when she thought them conducive to the glory of God and to the good of mankind, and which enabled her to go on with perseverance until her endeavours were crowned with success. The confidence she had in the goodness of God, and in the superabundant merits of Christ, made her firmly hope that she would attain to the bliss of heaven, of which she spoke to her confessor with the greatest satisfaction ; and on these occasions the tears of joy and tenderness flowed from her eyes, and she seemed to melt away in devotion. This hope supported her in all her undertakings and labours, and gave her comfort in all the sufferings she had to undergo.

The same confidence in God, and a fear lest she should offend him, arising from a sense of her own weakness, and of the danger from the attacks of her spiritual enemies, made her beg for help from heaven with great frequency and fervour. She employed a considerable part of the day in prayer, both in her closet and in the church, during the whole year, besides her frequent ejaculations. The forty days before Christmas, and the same before Easter, were dedicated by her to devotion, in a more particular manner ; that she might prepare herself to celebrate the nativity and resurrection of our Saviour with greater profit. At those times it was her custom to rise at midnight to the office in the church, where she recited with great attention the offices of the most holy Trinity, of the passion, of the blessed Virgin, and of the dead. She also took a particular delight in repeating the Psalms of David, which being inspired by the Holy Ghost, are full of sentiments of the most sublime piety, and contain numberless expressions,

sions, that may be easily adapted to every state of the soul. After some rest, in the morning, knowing well the great efficacy of the adorable sacrifice of the body and blood of Christ, she assisted at five or six low masses and at high mass, with such recollection, modesty and reverence, as greatly edified every beholder\*.

Some modern authors have criticised the length of St. Margaret's prayers, as if they had resembled the long prayers of the heathens, which our Saviour reprobated. But our heavenly master did not certainly condemn the employing of much time in conversing seriously with God, about the important affair of our salvation, and in praising and blessing the divine majesty, which is the constant employment of the angels and Saints in heaven. He blamed the long prayers of the Heathens, because they were made out of ostentation, and they lengthened their petitions for want of confidence in the Gods, to whom they addressed themselves. Margaret's long prayers were of the first, not of the second kind. She never neglected the performance of any duty through indiscreet devotion; but from her long prayers, she received light and strength to do every thing well. As she gave little time to sleep, very little to her meals, and none to idleness or vain amusements, she could allot the more of it to prayer. It is indeed observable, that very often they who give most of their time to devotion, are those who likewise perform the greatest things for the real good of mankind.

We have had occasion to mention, more than once, that love of God, with which the heart of Margaret was inflamed from her very infancy—This was increased by constant exercise, and by

her

her meditating daily on the infinite perfections of God, and on his unspeakable benefits to man. It was particularly nourished by her thinking often on what regards our dear Saviour; and, as in the gospels, his becoming man for us, his life, passion, and death are described, she carried them always with her, whithersoever she went. Once it happened, that a servant let this book fall into a river, and though it lay in the water for a day and a night, it was not in the least damaged, to the surprise of every body; and this was looked upon as a testimony of the holiness of her to whom it belonged.\*

From this her love of God proceeded an earnest desire to see him honoured here upon earth. Hence she built, repaired, and adorned many churches. Her rooms were sometimes like to warehouses of priestly vestments, and ornaments for the altar—so full they were of things of that nature. For the like reason, she recommended great respect to churches, and would not permit any thing to be done or said in them, which was not either absolutely necessary, or tended immediately to the divine service.

With the concurrence of her husband, she built at Dunfermline a magnificent church, dedicated to the blessed Trinity, in which she placed the famous black-cross, brought by herself to Scotland, and held in the greatest veneration, because it contained a piece of the true cross, on which our Saviour died for the salvation of the world.\* To officiate in the same church, she founded a convent of Benedictines adjoining to it and to the palace, endowing it with copious rents. She also built a chapel, in honour of the glorious virgin and martyr St. Catharine, the

F

ruins

\* Theod. Act. Sanct. 20 Jun. Brev. Aberr. † Less. L. 6. Aelred. p. 349 apud Twidla

ruins of which are still to be seen, three miles from Edinburgh, on the road to Roslin ; and the place still retains the name of St. Catharine's.— Near this chapel there is a fountain, on the water of which a dark oily substance floats. There is a tradition, mentioned more than two hundred years ago, by Boece, by Leslie bishop of Ross, and others, that a vial of miraculous oil, brought from the tomb of St. Catharine on mount Sina, and sent to Margaret, was broken here, and that hence the oil comes to be still seen on the water.\* It is said that this oil, which is often gathered from the well is useful in healing wounds. I have not heard, that it has ever been chemically examined. There is also in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, and near the village of Restalrig, another copious fountain of excellent water, which bears the name of St. Margaret ; but for what reason I have not been able to learn.

We have already given so many proofs of our Saint's most active love to her neighbour, that it seems unnecessary to add any thing on that subject. The whole of her life in Scotland was a continual exercise of the corporal and spiritual works of mercy.

Attending to the precepts of Jesus Christ, who required of his followers, in the strongest terms, that they deny themselves, Margaret practised outward and inward self-denials, with great assiduity ; and her sorrow for the offences against God, which she apprehended in herself, and which she knew were too often committed by others, made her think it necessary to exercise herself daily in penitential works. Her feeding of so many poor persons with her own hands,

and

\* *Lesl. de Scrip. Scotiz. Boece. Scot. Regn. Descrip. fol. 6.*

and her washing of their feet, were not only acts of charity and humility, but likewise of mortification and penance. Her oftentimes leaving of her rest, and her spending of so many hours of the night in the church, was self-denying and penitential. Her meals were so sparing, that her confessor says, that she seemed rather to taste only of the dishes brought to her table, than to eat of them ; and during the above mentioned forty days before Christmas, and for as many before Easter, she observed a rigorous fast\*. The same confessor was of opinion, that her excessive fasting might have contributed to bring on violent pains in her stomach. Hence a late writer blames her, as if she had ruined her constitution, and shortened her life by these fasts. On this we may observe, that the Saints are not exempt from all failings ; and if they are found to have really fallen into any mistake, this ought not to be approved or imitated. But fasting is much recommended in the scripture, as a powerful means of overcoming our passions, and for obtaining mercy of God for ourselves and others, when it is accompanied by devout prayer. It has been much practised by the holiest men, and when not carried to very great excess, instead of hurting health, it is often useful to it, so that many of the greatest fasters have arrived to a very advanced age. With regard to Margaret, she might have died in the forty seventh year of her life, even tho' she had taken full meals, as happens to so many others. We may also venture to say, that she meant well ; that she saw the necessity of giving good example in this respect, and that she may have had many other reasons

\* Theod. Act. Sanct. 10 Jun.

sions for acting as she did, that are unknown to us.

She was not however ignorant, that outward austeries avail nothing, and are even dangerous, unless they are animated by inward mortification of the passions. Wherefore it was her constant endeavour, to regulate well all the affections of her will, directing them to their proper objects, and restraining them within the limits, which reason and religion have prescribed for them. In this, with the divine aid, she was so successful, that she always maintained an uniform, sedate, cheerful equality of mind, without being puffed up by prosperity, or cast down by adversity ; and although she was of a lively disposition, tho' she saw clearly what was unreasonable in the words or actions of others, and was naturally apt to be provoked by it to anger, yet she had acquired such an habitual mildness, that she never allowed a harsh or offensive word to proceed from her mouth ; and even when she was obliged to correct the faults of those under her care, she reprehended them with so much temper, with so much reason, and in so agreeable a manner, that the persons reproved, tho' they could not perhaps be much pleased with the reproof itself, yet they could not help esteeming and loving her from whom it came, being more convinced than ever, that she really had at her heart their true welfare.

Whatever she did or said, was seasoned, and regulated by prudence and discretion. She proposed good ends, made choice of proper means, for obtaining her aim, and applied these means to the best advantage. But whatever was the event, she was perfectly resigned to divine providence,

vidence, knowing that thro' the narrowness of our views, we often see not what is most expedient ; but that what God appoints, will most certainly co-operate to the good of those who love him\*.

Having now, as we think, given a sufficient idea of the virtues which adorned the life of Margaret, we must now proceed to give an account of her last sickness and death, on which occasion she behaved, as the true servants of God are wont to do in like circumstances.

---

### C H A P. X.

#### *Of her last Sickness and Death.*

MARGARET had now enjoyed many temporal blessings for several years. She had a husband of great worth, who loved her tenderly, had the greatest esteem of her, and did nothing of consequence without her advice. She had also a numerous family of hopeful and dutiful children. The whole nation had the greatest respect for her, and she saw them profiting by the regulations, of which she was the principal author. But God in his wisdom often sees it expedient to send afflictions on his most faithful servants, in order to purify their souls from every stain of sin, to wean their hearts more effectually from the things of this world, drawing them entirely to himself, and that they may have an opportunity of exercising many christian virtues, which scarcely can have place when all goes on with one prosperously, and in a manner agreeable to nature. Thus it pleased the divine providence, to visit our saint with some very severe trials towards the end of her life.

In

In the spring of the year 1093, she was seized with a painful sickness, which she soon foresaw was to be her last. Wherefore, though her whole life had been a constant preparation for death, yet she thought it necessary to prepare herself now more particularly, for her appearance before the all-seeing judge. She therefore made a general confession of all that she thought might have been any ways sinful in her thoughts, words, or actions, from her childhood upwards ; and, however innocently she had lived, she made this confession, with signs of the greatest compunction. The tears dropped from her eyes, and her sighs often interrupted her words. When she had finished, she said to her confessor ' Farewell, for I shall not be here long ; you will stay some little time behind me. Two things I have to desire of you ; the one is, that so long as you live, you remember my poor soul in your masses and prayers ; the other is, that you assist my children, and teach them to fear and love God, and whenever you see any of them attain to the height of earthly grandeur, Oh ! then in an especial manner, be to them as a father and a guide. Admonish, and if need be, reprove them, lest they be swelled with the pride of momentary glory, thro' avarice offend God, or by reason of the prosperity of this world, become careless of eternal life. These things you must promise me here, in the presence of God, who alone is witness of our discourse.' She survived this about half a year, during which she was seldom able to rise out of bed, and her pains daily increased upon her, which she bore with incredible patience in silence and prayer\*. No fretfulness appeared

to

to those who attended her ; no word of complaint came from her mouth ; her mind was calm, her countenance serene. She sought for comfort only, in meditating on the passion, and to help her attention to this, she made a crucifix be so placed, that it might be always in her sight, and she often with great affection kissed on it, in representation, the wounds of her dying Jesus. To her sharp bodily pains there was added, a little before the close of her mortal pilgrimage, a heavy cause of inward grief, by the news which were brought to her, that her husband and eldest son were slain. We shall transcribe from Butler, his account of this their unfortunate expedition.

‘ St Margaret,’ says he, ‘ by her wise counsels had perfectly convinced her Royal Consort, that the love of peace is the first duty of him, who is the common father of his people ; war being the greatest of all temporal calamities. Malcolm however did not forget, that it is an indispensable duty of a King to be expert in war, and always in readiness, that he be not wanting to the protection, which he owes his people. William Rufus, who came to the throne of England in 1087, surprised the castle of Alnwick in Northumberland, and put the garrison to the sword. Malcolm demanded restitution, which being denied, he besieged it. The English garrison being reduced to great extremity, offered to surrender, and desired the the King to come, and receive the keys with his own hand ; but the soldier who presented them to him upon the point of a spear, by a base treachery, thrust the spear into his eye, whilst the king was stretching out his hand to take

take them, and killed him. His son Edward carried on the siege to revenge the death of his father, but advancing too eagerly was slain in an assault. Whereupon the Scots were so much afflicted, that they raised the siege and retired, having buried their King and Prince at Tinmouth\*. Thus Butler. Fordoun gives the circumstance of Malcolm's eye being pierced as only a report, for which he had not good authority; and some English writers relate, that he was killed fighting in a skirmish; but William of Mahmesbury, a very credible English Historian owns, that Malcolm *fell by the deceit of his enemies, rather than by their bravery* †, which seems to confirm Fordoun's report.

On the day on which Malcolm was killed, Margaret appeared melancholy and sad; and said to those about her, 'perhaps this day a greater evil hath befallen Scotland, than any this long time.' On the fourth day, her pains being somewhat abated, she arose, and went into her oratory, where she confessed and received the holy viaticum.\* Then feeling the redoublement of her fever, with her pains, return upon her, she laid herself down and desired the chaplains to recite the Psalms by her, and to recommend her soul to God. In the mean time she called for the famous black cross. She embraced it and signed herself frequently with it.— Then she held it, with both her hands before her, and with her eyes fixed upon it, recited the Psalm, *Have mercy on me, O! God*, and other prayers. Whilst she was thus employed, her son Edgar returning from the army, approached her couch.

\* Butler, SS. LL. June 10. Fordun. L. V. C. 25. Boece, L. 12. f. 206. † W. Malm. p. 122. \* Chr. Mailf.

couch. ‘ How fares it with the King and my Edward ? ’ The youth stood silent. ‘ I know all,’ cried she, ‘ I know all ; by this holy cross, by your filial affection, I adjure you, tell me the truth.’ He answered ; ‘ Your husband and your son are both slain.’ Lifting her eyes and hands towards heaven, she said ; ‘ Praise and blessing be to thee, O ! Almighty God, that thou hast been pleased to make me endure so bitter anguish, in the hour of my departure, thereby, as I trust, to purify me in some measure from the corruption of my sins ; and thou, Lord Jesus Christ, who through the will of thy father, hast enlivened the world by thy death, O ! deliver me\*.’ While pronouncing *deliver me*, she expired. All her sufferings of soul and body, were now for ever at an end ; and she began to enjoy unspeakable bliss in the possession of the supreme Good, after whom she had so ardently aspired. The great Judge, whom she had served so diligently, said to her, ‘ Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of thy Lord.’ Her death happened in Edinburgh Castle, on the 16th of November in the year 1093 ; according to the Chronicle of Mailros, which is one of the most authentic monuments that we have : and in the forty seventh year of her age.

### C H A P XI.

#### *Of the Veneration paid to her after her Death.*

THE countenance of our saint, which had been rendered thin and pale by her long sickness, put on, after her death, a better colour, and a comely, agreeable appearance. This unusual circum-

G stance,

\* Theod. Act. Sanct. Bolland. ad 10 Junii. Matth. Par. p. 17.

stance, and the firm belief of her sanctity, took away from the beholders all that horror, which is wont to be felt in seeing a lifeless corpse ;\* she was looked at, with grief indeed for the loss of her, but with great respect. Her body was carried after some days from Edinburgh to Dunfermling, where it was interred in the church of the blessed Trinity, built by herself. To the same church, after some time, were removed from Tynmouth, the bodies of her husband and of their son Edward. In the same place were buried, afterwards, five other kings, Edgar, Alexander I. David, Malcolm IV. and the famous Robert Bruce.

There was a great lamentation all over the kingdom for the death of their brave King and Prince ; and a still greater for that of their holy Queen. The poor complained that they had no more their affectionate mother ; the Clergy grieved for having lost in her their best friend ; the whole nation deplored their being deprived of a person, who so earnestly sought and efficaciously procured their general welfare. All agreed that Margaret had lived amongst them the life of a Saint ; and many began soon to visit her tomb with great veneration.

We are taught by the voice of nature itself to preserve and revere the memory of great and good persons ; and this is useful to us ; because it lays before our eyes excellent models, which we may profitably imitate, and also encourages us to undertake this imitation. Besides this, the church of Christ has always believed, that the blessed in heaven, through the communion of saints professed in the creed, intercede for the faithful on earth ; and especially for those who beg

beg that intercession of them. But to prevent mistakes in applying that veneration and invocation, the Pope, who is the supreme director of ecclesiastical discipline, has referred to himself the power of declaring, what persons are deserving of being venerated and invocated, before it can lawfully be done publickly in churches. This pontifical declaration is called canonization; and it always presupposes a publick opinion of the sanctity of the persons to be canonized, at least for the latter part of their lives. This publick opinion of Margaret's sanctity had already prevailed all over Britain, for the space of more than one hundred and fifty years, when it received the sanction of Pope Innocent IV. in the year 1250. On that occasion, and on the 19th of June of that year, the body of the Saint was taken up from the grave, where it had hitherto lain, and was put into a silver shrine, adorned with precious stones, which was placed under the high altar of the church.\* This translation was honoured by the presence of King Alexander III. of the prime nobility, of several bishops and many abbots, with a great concourse of people.† We may here observe, that the respect paid to the bodies of the Saints is dictated by nature and faith. We naturally have a regard for the remains of our friends and relations; and what true christian is there, who looks ever the least beyond appearances, who will not also reverence those bodies, tho' now reduced to a condition disagreeable to the human eye, which nevertheless were once the temples of the Holy Ghost, and which will one day, in a glorified state, shine more bright than the sun, in the kingdom of God?

Of

\* Brev. Abdæ, 19 Jun. † Dæmpst. Menol. Scot. Læd. I. vi. Boece. I. xiii.

After this canonization, the number of those who visited the shrine of the Saint, in the hopes of obtaining by her intercession spiritual or temporal blessings, became much greater. Many of those came from the south, and when, on the road from Edinburgh, they arrived on the rising ground, about a mile southward from the Queensferry, so called from our holy Queen's passing there frequently ; the fine prospect of the Firth of Forth, of the coasts of Fife, and of the distant hills opened to them ; and they saw before them the town of Dunfermling beautifully situated. Here the Pilgrim naturally stopped and fixed his eyes on this spot, to which his steps were directed. There is a tradition, that such persons were wont, at this place, to fall on their knees in prayer. Hence this was regarded as a place of devotion, and a cross of stone was erected, which was demolished at the change of religion ; but its pedestal is still to be seen, and the eminence has the name to this day of *Cross Hill*, and so likewise the neighbouring farm is called. Such pilgrimages, when undertaken for mere amusement, and are made with dissipation, are no doubt censurable ; but when a person interrupts his temporal business, and can do so without any injury to others ; when he leaves his home in the spirit of penance and devotion, and really gives the time of his absence to meditation and prayer ; this is not only an outward profession of religion and a strong proof of veneration to something that relates to God : but may also contribute greatly with God's grace to a perfect conversion to a pious life, or to confirm one in the good dispositions he had before.

But almost all this veneration to St Margaret was put a stop to, by the pretended reformati-  
on ;

on ; and their being danger of disrespect to her venerable remains from the Knoxian mob, the head, with some of the hair, was removed by some pious person to the Castle of Edinburgh, where it remained for some time. Thence it was carried to the house of the Laird of Dury, where it was carefully kept for some years by a Benedictine Monk of that surname ; until it was consigned to the fathers of the society of Jesus, in the year 1597. One of these fathers, by name John Robie, wisely conveyed it out of the kingdom to Antwerp in the Low Countries. The bishop of this city, John Malder, after a strict examination, and having taken the deposition upon oath of some of the said fathers, gave an authentic attestation, that he was fully convinced of its being truly the head of St. Margaret, on the 5th of September in the year 1620, granting leave at the same time for its being exposed to public veneration. From Antwerp the same venerable relic was transported to the Scots college at Douay. Here again it was juridically recognised and acknowledged to be authentic, on the 4th of September, in the year 1627, by Paul Boudot bishop of Arras. Pope Innocent X. by a brief dated on the 4th of March in the year 1645, granted a plenary indulgence to those who should visit the church of the said college on the tenth of June, to which day our Saint's feast had been transferred, for what reason is uncertain ; which grant was confirmed several times by his successors.\*

Bishop Challoner in his *Britannia Sancta*, and Mr Butler in his *Saints Lives*, affirm that the rest of St. Margaret's body and that of her husband Malcolm were carried to Spain, and placed by

Philip

\* Papebroch. in Act. Sanct. Rolland. 10 Jun.

Philip II. in the church of St. Laurance at the Escurial, with the inscriptions *Saint Margaret Queen*; *Saint Malcom King*, on the urns containing them. But what documents they had for this fact, or by whose means the conveyance was made, I have not as yet been able to learn. It is true the name of Malcolm III. occurs in some catalogues of Scotch Saints; but this rests on the private authority and opinion of the writer.

The days of the year, on which the memory of Saints is honoured by the church are, for the most part, those days, on which these servants of God were called by him out of this mortal pilgrimage to a new life of everlasting bliss; but sometimes, for particular reasons, other days are appointed. There has been some variation with regard to the day set apart for the veneration of St. Margaret. From the time of her canonization, during the space of more than three hundred years, down to the suppression of the public exercise of the Catholic Religion in Scotland, the church of this kingdom, honoured her on the 16th of November, which was the day of her death, and likewise on the 19th of June, the anniversary of the translation of her body, mentioned above. On both these days, there was a particular office said in her memory, as appears from the Breviary of Aberdeen, printed at Edinburgh in the year 1510, after having been revised by Bishop Elphinston. In the year 1673, in consequence of a petition in the name of the Scotch Catholics, presented by Baron Menzies of the family of Pitfoddels, who had been educated in the Scotch College of Douay, and was at that time Envoy to his Holiness from the Czar of Muscovy, Clement X. allowed the office

office of our Holy Queen, on the tenth day of June, to be said by all those who make use of the Roman Missal and Breviary. At the same time she was declared Patroness Saint of Scotland, second in order; the apostle St. Andrew having been chosen many ages before for principal Patron. Innocent XI. on account of the moveable festivals, that fall about the beginning of June, changed her feast to the eighth of July; but in the year 1693, it was brought back to the tenth of June, by Innocent XII. at the petition of James VII. and that petition was probably made because his son had been born on that day. On this occasion likewise her office, which was before only allowed to be said, was made of obligation.\* The three historical lessons that are read in the office of St. Margaret, in the Roman Breviary, are a not in-elegant abridgment of her life; and by means of them her virtues are known and celebrated, wherever that Breviary is recited, which is in all the four quarters of the globe.

---

C H A P. XII.*A Short Account of her Children.*

WE come now to give, as we have promised, a short account of our Saint's eight children; that so from this the good effects of the excellent education they received from her may the more clearly appear. We have already mentioned that Edward, the eldest of them, was killed at Alnwick. His death was much lamented by the whole nation, for he had been much esteemed and beloved by all who knew him; and his behaviour had given reason to expect from him every thing that is good.

Ethelred,

\* Papbooch in Act. Sanct. Bolland. 10 Jun.

Ethelred, the second son, died when he was young; yet it seems he had already betaken himself to a religious state of life; and there is a charter in the Excerpts of the priory of St. Andrew's wherein he is called a man of venerable memory, *Abbot of Dunkeld*. Boece tells us, that in the reign of James II. a wall falling down in the church of Dunfermling, a body was discovered, which was supposed to be his. It was laid in a leaden coffin, and was wrapt in silk.—This body was that of a youth, and was found perfectly entire, without any sign of corruption.\*

Concerning Edmund, historians are not agreed. Some relate, that he retired to England and led a solitary angelical life; some say, that he was put to death by his Uncle Donald Bane, in the time of his usurpation; but William of Malmesbury has the following passage. ‘ Edmund was the only son of Margaret, who swerved from good. He becoming partaker of the crime of his uncle Donald, had not been ignorant of the murder of his brother Duncan, having agreed to it for the half of the kingdom. But being apprehended, (by whom it is not said,) and having been detained in perpetual imprisonment, he repented sincerely; and at his death gave order that he should be buried with his chains, acknowledging, that he had been punished deservedly for the part he had taken in the murder of his brother.†

Edgar the fourth son, came not to the throne until the year 1097. For, after the death of Malcolm, his brother Donald Bane, who had lived in the Western Isles, from the time of Macbeth's usurpation, came over to Scotland with an army

\* Boece. l. 18. fol. 367. † W. Malm. p. 158.

army of Islanders, and usurped the crown ; but within a few months he was displaced by Duncan, a natural son of Malcolm's, or, according to some authors, a lawful son by a former marriage. Next year Donald procured the murder of Duncan, and again seized the reins of government, which he continued to hold for above two years.\* In the beginning of Donald's usurpation, Edgar had retired with his two younger brothers and his two sisters into England, where he was received and protected by his uncle Edgar Etheling, who lived there in quiet under the government of William Rufus. And, in the above mentioned year 1097, the young Edgar, with the assistance of his uncle, and the concurrence of Rufus, returned to Scotland, overcame Donald, and condemned him to perpetual imprisonment, where his eyes were put out to prevent his giving any farther disturbance.† Edgar was now crowned at Scone ; on which occasion the sacred unction was first made use of, as we have said above, at the coronation of a King of Scotland. He reigned nine years in perfect peace and prosperity. Aldred gives of him the following character. ' He was a sweet tempered amiable man, in all things resembling Edward the confessor ; mild in his administration, equitable and beneficent.§ It seems he was never married.

Alexander, the next son, succeeded his brother in the beginning of the year 1107. He was a brave, valiant Prince, just, charitable and religious. He was something terrible to his nobles, from whom he required exact obedience ; but his commands were reasonable. The same Aldred says of him, ' that he was courteous to his

## H

clergy,

\* Fordun, v. 26. † Chy. Sacr. p. 206. S. Dun. p. 223. § Aelred, in gen. rig. Angl. p. 367.

clergy, zealous in establishing churches, in collecting relics, and in providing vestments and books for the Ecclesiastics ; liberal, even to profusion, and taking delight in the offices of charity to the poor.\* He made a large grant of lands to the church of St. Andrew ; he increased the revenues of the monastery of Dunfermling, which his parents had founded ; he brought a colony of Canons regular from England, and established them at Scoon. To the same Canons he gave Lochtay, where his Queen Sybilla, a natural daughter of Henry the first of England, died.† He also built a monastery on the island of Inchcolm, in the firth of Forth ; for having reached that island, with great difficulty, in a violent tempest, and having been detained there for three days, and hospitably entertained by a Hermit, on his scanty stores ; he ascribed his deliverance to the intercession of St. Columba, Patron of the isle, and founded the monastery to testify his gratitude. He died in the year 1124, leaving no children.‡

David, the youngest son, by the death of his brothers without children, was obliged to ascend the throne ; for which dignity he had no ambition, tho' he was most worthy of it. He began to reign in the year 1124, and was one of the best Kings that ever ruled in Scotland, or in any other kingdom. He was prudent, valiant, just, liberal, active, charitable, affable, and very pious. He made it his earnest endeavour to choose the fittest persons to be judges, and to hold the other public offices ; he watched over their behaviour ; and was often present himself to hear their decisions ; and when he discovered any injustices done, or any oppression, he punished

the

\* Acrel. Gen. Reg. Angl. p. 368. † Fordun. I. v. c. 36. & 37. ‡ Fordun. I. v. c. 37. Boece. L. v. c.

the guilty, in an exemplary manner, to give satisfaction to his subjects, and to frighten others from committing the like crimes. He was wont to sit at the door of his palace, on certain days, to give audience to all without distinction ; and on these occasions, he was at great pains to convince those against whom he had decided, of the reasonableness of his decisions, that so they might depart with contented minds.† He used hunting as an exercise useful to health ; yet so as never to encroach on the hours of business. ‘ I have seen him,’ says Aldred, ‘ quit his horse and dismiss his hunting equipage, when any even of the meanest of his subjects, implored a hearing.’ At sunset he dismissed all his attendants and retired to meditate on his duty to God and his people. At day break he resumed his beneficent labours.\*

This excellent king was well convinced, that the christian religion is not only necessary, for our attaining to happiness in the next life, but is also the most effectual means for rendering subjects obedient to the laws, peaceable and united among themselves, industrious and content. He therefore promoted it very much by his advice, by his example, and by his extraordinary liberality. He founded the bishopricks of Ross, Dunblane and Brechin. He converted the monastery of Culdees at Dunkeld, dedicated to St. Columba, into a Cathedral church. He translated the Episcopal See from Mortlach to Old Aberdeen, and augmented its revenues. He also founded and liberally endowed the Abbey of Holy-rood-house for Canons regular, the Abbey of Meltofs, of Newbottle, of Kinlofs, of Dryburgh, of Jedburgh, Selkirk, Kelso, with the priory

† Fordun. l. v. c. 49. \* Fordun. l. v. 52.

priory of Lefmahago dependent on it, Cambuskenneth near Stirling, and perhaps other ones; he likewise founded a Convent of Cistertian Nuns at Berwick, with two cells depending on it, the one at Trefontain in Lammermuir, the other Golyn in the shire of Haddington. He converted, finally, the monastery of Dunfermling into an Abbey, and annexed to it the priory of Urquhart.

David has been frequently blamed, for his alienating so much of the crown lands in favour of the church. In answer to this accusation, we shall in the first place give the sentiments of the late Lord Hailes, who must be allowed to have been an unexceptionable judge of the subject.

‘ We ought (says he) to judge of the conduct of men according to the notions of *their age*, not of *ours*. To endow monasteries may now be considered as a prodigal superstition; but in the days of David I. it was esteemed an act of pious beneficence. Much may be urged in justification of this beneficence. Altho’ David was the founder of many monasteries, it was not he alone who endowed them. An ample accession to their revenues was obtained in succeeding ages, by the donations of private men, as well as Princes. In monasteries, the lamp of knowledge continued to burn, however dimly. In them men of busines were formed for the state; the art of writing was cultivated by the monks, and they wrote in characters remarkably elegant; they were the only proficients in mechanics, gardening and architecture. When we examine the sites of ancient monasteries, we are sometimes inclined to say, with the vulgar, that the clergy, in former times,

times, always chose the best of the land, and the most commodious habitations ; but we do not advert, that religious houses were frequently erected on waste grounds, afterwards improved by the art and industry of the clergy, who alone had art and industry. That many monasteries did, in process of time, become the seats of sloth, ignorance and debauchery, I deny not. Candour, however, forbids us to ascribe accidental and unforeseen evils to the virtuous founder.\*

Thus far Lord Hailes ; and to what his Lordship has been pleased to say we may add, that the religious houses charitably supported the poor all around them ; that their hospitable doors were always open to the weary traveller ; that they contributed much to the instruction of the ignorant in the way of salvation ; that they afforded a convenient retreat to persons of a contemplative disposition, in order to improve themselves in piety and learning, and to the sinner tired of the world, in which he might prepare for death and eternity ; that in their churches the devout christian might find a proper place, at almost every hour of the day, for prayer and meditation ; that they offered up daily supplications for the welfare of the King and kingdom, and for the repose of the faithful departed, and finally, that they performed divine service with assiduity, decency, and often with splendour. The monasteries for women were particularly useful for the education of young ladies in virtue and religion, and for the retirement of those, who had given up all thoughts of entering into the married state. We may likewise observe, that their houses and possessions were often respected

\* Hailes Ann. of Scot. vol. I. p. 99.

pected and spared by both parties in the time of war, to the great advantage of the country ; that their tenants had commonly easy conditions, and were treated with great mildness ; that their income was originally spent in the neighbourhood ; and that they were a kind of publick good, to which every proper person had access, and by which the whole nation was benefited.

We must nevertheless acknowledge, that with time degeneracy crept into some of these houses designed for piety, and that their riches drew into them improper persons. Yet it must be likewise observed, that their faults were greatly exaggerated by those who were interested in their destruction. The opulent abbacies were thought by greedy courtiers, an excellent prey to be turned into rich Lordships ; and it was necessary to render the former possessors odious to the people, that so the injury done to the public might be suffered the more tamely. The new preachers, at the change of religion, were declared antagonists to the religious orders, and sometimes deserters from their regularity and strictness of manners, and therefore they were very fit tools for calumniating them, and for assisting those, whose avarice grasped at their possessions.

As for King David, he saw clearly that such establishments would tend greatly to civilize his people, and to render them good christians ; nor was he disappointed in his expectations. He was much assisted in the government of his people, by the most virtuous Prince, Henry his son, of whom however he was deprived about a year before his own death. This loss he bore with astonishing patience, amidst the mourning of the whole kingdom.\* Upon that occasion he

\* Chr. S. Crucis apud. Angl. Sacr. I. 165.

he invited the chief nobility to supper, and comforted them, saying, 'that it would be foolish and impious, in any thing whatever, to repine at the will of God, which is always most holy, just and wise; and that seeing good men must die, we ought to comfort ourselves, because no evil can happen to them that serve God, either alive or dead.'‡ To these noblemen he recommended his three grandsons, and particularly Malcolm the eldest, whom he sent, accompanied by some of them, on a solemn progress thro' the kingdom, to be seen by the subjects, and to be acknowledged as heir to the crown. Perceiving now that the time of his departure out of this world was approaching, he settled the affairs of the nation in the most prudent manner possible, and retiring to the priory of Carlisle, gave himself entirely to exercises of devotion. Thinking that he was very near to death, he made himself be conducted to the church, to receive the holy viatic, saying, that he was unworthy to have it brought to him. Soon after, on the 24th of May in the year 1153, he was found dead in the morning with his hands joined, in a devout posture, so that it appeared, that he had expired in actual prayer.\* His body was brought to Dunfermling, and interred near to the rest of his family. He is very deservedly reckoned among the Saints of Scotland. Thus far concerning the six sons of St. Margaret.

The eldest of the daughters was Matilda or Maud, who in the year 1100 was married to Henry the first, King of England. Of her Butler says, that she faithfully imitated the humility, charity, and other virtues of her holy mother. She performed the like charitable offices towards

the

‡ Butler. SS. LL. 10 June. \* Aldred apud Fordun. I. v. c. 59.

the poor ; in Lent she went bare-foot to the church, and is said to have worn a shirt of hair under the Royal Robes. She was deservedly surnamed the Good, and she has been ranked, in the catalogue of the Saints of England on the 30th of April. She built two great Hospitals in London ; that of Christ's Church within Aldgate, and that called St. Giles's. Matthew Paris, and other English historians relate, that her brother David, seeing her one day employed in washing the feet of lepers, and kissing them, asked her, ' how she thought the king her husband would bear to touch those lips, that had been defiled with the corrupt matter of such ulcerous feet ? ' To which she answered with a smile, ' that she preferred the feet of the eternal King before the lips of any mortal Prince.'— She died in the year 1118, and was buried in Westminster Abbey, near St. Edward the confessor. She left one daughter, of her own name, who was first married to the Emperor Henry V. and afterwards to Geoffrey, son to the count of Anjou, and by this last was mother to Henry II. King of England.\*

Our Saint's second daughter was Mary, who in the year 1102, was joined in marriage to Eustace, Count of Boulogne, brother to the famous Godfrey, King of Jerusalem ; and had one daughter called Matilda, who was wife to Stephen King of England. This Mary was likewise a princess of singular piety towards God, and charity towards her neighbour ; to testify which, Simeon of Durham tells us, that there were several pieces of sculpture representing her virtuous actions, to be seen in St. Saviour's Church at London ; tho' they are now effaced.

Such

\* Sim. Dun. Harpsf. & Math. Par. p. 61. 67.

Such were the children of St. Margaret ; and from this our account of them may be learned what happy effects were produced by the education she gave them, and how carefully they followed her good example. May the same example, which we have endeavoured here to describe, stir up all those who read these sheets, to discharge themselves well of their respective duties, and thus glorify God, and secure their own eternal welfare !



A circular postmark from the Royal Mail, dated May 27, 1853. The postmark features a crown in the center, surrounded by the words "ROYAL MAIL" and "POSTAGE PAID". The date "27 MAY 1853" is stamped in the center of the circle.



a  
K  
pr  
rit  
me  
ral p.  
action  
London

